UNITED
NATIONS

E

Economic and Social Council

Distr.
GENERAL

E/CN.5/1997/4
21 January 1997

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

COMMISSION FOR SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT
Thirty-fifth session
25 February 1997-6 March 1997
Item 3 (b) of the provisional agenda*

FOLLOW-UP TO THE WORLD SUMMIT FOR SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT: REVIEW OF RELEVANT UNITED NATIONS PLANS AND PROGRAMMES OF ACTION PERTAINING TO THE SITUATION OF SOCIAL GROUPS

Fourth review and appraisal of the implementation of the International Plan of Action on Ageing

Report of the Secretary-General

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* E/CN.5/1997/1.

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INTRODUCTION

1. In its resolution 37/51, the General Assembly endorsed the International Plan of Action on Ageing,[1] and requested the Economic and Social Council, through the Commission for Social Development, to review the implementation of the Plan of Action every four years and to transmit its findings to the General Assembly. In its resolution 42/51, the General Assembly reaffirmed its endorsement of the Plan of Action and requested the Secretary-General, through the Commission, to continue to monitor progress in the implementation of the Plan of Action through the quadrennial review and appraisal process. The first review and appraisal was conducted in 1985 (see E/1985/6 and Corr.1), the second in 1989 (see E/1989/13) and the third review in 1992 (see E/CN.5/1993/7). In accordance with Economic and Social Council decision 1996/243, the Commission for Social Development is expected to establish, at its thirty-fifth session, an in-session open-ended ad hoc working group for the purpose of carrying out the fourth review and appraisal of the Plan of Action and reviewing preparations for the observance of the International Year of Older Persons in 1999.

2. The present report has been prepared to assist the Commission in conducting the fourth review and appraisal of the implementation of the Plan of Action. As for the second and third review and appraisal, the report is based on replies to questionnaires sent to Governments, United Nations entities and non-governmental organizations, as well as other information available to the Secretariat. For the second review and appraisal, 59 replies to the questionnaire were received; for the third review and appraisal, 77 replies were received from countries and areas (58 from developing countries and areas, and 19 from developed countries and areas), 14 from United Nations entities and 23 from non-governmental organizations; and for the fourth review and appraisal, 57 replies[2] were received from countries and areas (21 from developed countries and areas and 34 from developing countries), 13 from United Nations entities and 55 from non-governmental organizations (see annexes I-III).

3. The fourth review and appraisal is based on replies to the same basic set of questions asked in the third review and appraisal. It should be noted, however, that the countries represented in the two exercises are not all the same.

4. The fourth review and appraisal takes place in the context of preparations for the 1999 International Year of Older Persons (A/50/114). In order to gather specific information on preparations for the Year, United Nations Member States, United Nations bodies and specialized agencies, and selected non-governmental organizations were requested to provide information on the establishment of focal points for the Year and designate priorities for their preparatory activities within the four dimensions of the conceptual framework for the Year.

I. SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

5. The findings of the third review and appraisal, like those of the first and second review and appraisals, suggested that translating the growing awareness of ageing into action-oriented policies and programmes remained difficult (see

E/CN.5/1993/7, para. 5). The fourth review and appraisal reveals the same themes: the population over 60 has grown dramatically, yet the response has been minimal at best. Developed countries, with sufficient time and resources to address ageing issues, generally have in place a range of policies and programmes that respond to the growing older population. Developing countries, on the other hand, have responded to the issue in an uneven way. The positive news is that more and more Governments in developing countries report having policies and programmes in place to support older citizens. And perhaps equally important, non-governmental organizations have increased their substantive presence in helping to address ageing issues and needs in those countries.

6. The implementation of the International Plan of Action on Ageing at the national level depends on the availability and functioning of a national infrastructure to support age-related policies and programmes. As in the third review and appraisal, the evidence of infrastructure development that emerges from the fourth review and appraisal is promising. In the fourth review and appraisal, nearly three quarters of the countries surveyed, up from two thirds in the third review and appraisal, have reported the presence of a national coordinating mechanism on ageing. Although a slight decline in developed countries has been noted, there has been an increase from approximately 60 to 70 per cent in developing countries. Over four fifths of the countries participating in the fourth review and appraisal have reported that they have multiple non-governmental organizations of, and/or for, older persons. And more than four fifths of the Governments surveyed, up from two thirds in the third review and appraisal, have promoted a national day of older citizens. Nearly three quarters of the Governments surveyed have promulgated either the United Nations Principles for Older Persons or other legislation on the rights of the older citizens.

7. Several findings, however, indicate that progress in implementing the Plan of Action remains modest. In more than one quarter of the reporting countries, there is no identifiable national coordinating mechanism for ageing. As in the third review and appraisal, only half the countries report a national plan of action on ageing, and a country-based research or training centre designed to deal with issues related to ageing is reported in less than half the countries covered. National directories of organizations concerned with ageing and older persons are reported to be available in only about one quarter of the countries covered. In most cases, as in the third review, developing countries have continued to lag significantly behind developed countries in the development of an infrastructure to address the ageing of their populations.

8. In over two thirds of countries responding to the questionnaire, population ageing has been recognized and addressed in national development plans, including its potential impact on pensions and the costs of caring for frail older persons. At the same time, there has been a growing recognition that older persons can be assisted in living a productive life by expanding their income-generating potential and by employment training and placement. In developing countries, the role of non-governmental organizations in supporting the income-generating activities of older persons has grown most significantly.

9. How to provide for the health care of an ageing population is a concern in many countries. Fewer countries in the fourth review and appraisal than in the

third have reported the availability of preventive and rehabilitation programmes that deal with age-specific disorders. Health-care services specifically designed to deal with the needs of older persons, together with geriatric training, are available in developed countries but are available in only about one third of developing countries. In developing countries, the growing demand for such services has continued to be unmet. Only one third of the developing countries that submitted replies to the questionnaire have reported that health services specifically designed for older persons are available. Home health care is available in one fourth of those countries, but serving only a small fraction of older persons in most cases. And as in the third review and appraisal, geriatric training for nurses, physicians and social workers is available in only half the reporting developing countries.

10. The housing and living environment of older persons, as reported in the fourth review and appraisal, receives less attention from Governments and non-governmental organizations, compared with the third review and appraisal. Less than one fifth of the developing countries report a housing policy for older persons, down from nearly one third in the third review and appraisal. Where there is a housing policy, its focus is first on integrated housing for older persons, then on adapted housing, and finally on special segregated housing for older persons. Where non-governmental organizations are active in housing and environmental issues, they tend to focus on establishing boarding or residential homes for older persons, education on personal security, and the coordination of housing and community services.

11. As in the third review and appraisal, in the fourth Governments have reported only limited programmes whose aim was to support the continued integration of older persons in their families. The available support has focused on social services for families providing care and educational programmes to assist family members caring for their older relatives and to promote positive roles for older family members. Developing countries have focused their attention on educational programmes for families and on promoting inter-generational income-generating projects. Older women continue to be especially vulnerable as only one quarter of the countries report the availability of measures to support older women and widows.

12. In the absence of adequate home and family care for older persons, community and public social welfare services become important. Most developed countries have reported the availability of social welfare services for older persons. Two thirds of developing countries have reported having such services as centres or clubs for older persons, meal programmes and home help, a slightly higher level than that reported in the third review and appraisal. Non-governmental organizations are reported to be particularly important in providing those services in developing countries. The majority of the participating countries have reported having institutional facilities for older persons, including over two thirds of the developing countries. Only one third of developed and one quarter of developing countries plan to expand the existing institutional facilities.

13. Nearly all countries have reported having either a fixed or flexible retirement age. One fourth of the developing countries have reported having a universal pension or social security scheme, a slight increase over the level

reported in the third review and appraisal. In countries with only limited schemes, pensions or social security coverage is available principally to workers in the private organized sectors, and to government workers, disabled older persons and work veterans. Those in the informal workforce generally receive no pension benefits. Programmes to support the employment of older persons or to help in developing income-generating projects are reported to be available in approximately one third to one half of the countries. Although still in a limited way, non-governmental organizations are involved in supporting microenterprise development, cooperatives for older persons and self-employment schemes. Minimum benefits to meet the essential needs of the most vulnerable of older persons and protection against age discrimination are reported to be available in the great majority of developed countries, but only in about one fifth of the developing countries.

14. Consistent with the findings of the third review and appraisal, only between one third and one half of the countries covered have reported that educational opportunities are available to older persons. A large number of countries have reported that older persons are used in formal programmes as teachers of cultural heritage, as leaders in intergenerational projects, and in arts and handicraft classes. Education for the general public on ageing has remained focused on the health and social needs of older persons, older persons as a resource, and intergenerational solidarity.

II. THE AGEING OF THE WORLD'S POPULATION

15. Over the past few years, the world's population has continued on its remarkable transition path from a state of high birth and death rates to one characterized by low birth and death rates.[3, 4] At the heart of that transition has been the growth in the number and proportion of older persons (see figs. I-III). Such a rapid, large and ubiquitous growth has never been seen in the history of civilization.

16. The current demographic revolution is predicted to continue well into the coming century. Its major features include the following:

(a) In 1950, there were about 200 million persons aged 60 years or older in the world: persons in that age group now number almost 550 million. In about the year 2020, the world ageing population will reach 1 billion, and in 2025 will reach 1.2 billion (see fig. I);

(b) Even more dramatic is the expected increase in the number of very old people (aged 80+ years): that group is projected to grow by a factor of from 8 to 10 times on the global scale, between 1950 and 2025;

(c) The major increase in the world's older persons population is expected to occur in the less developed countries. Already the majority of older persons (61 per cent) live in developing countries. By the year 2025, more than 70 per cent of older persons are projected to live in what is today called the developing world;

(d) The majority of older persons (55 per cent) are women. In some countries, older women outnumber older men two to one;

(e) In some developed countries today, the proportion of older persons is close to one in five (see fig. III). During the first half of the next century that proportion will reach one in four and in some countries one in two;

(f) The process of demographic transition from a youthful to a more mature society is occurring in developing countries much faster than it did in developed countries. It took France 115 years (from 1865 to 1980) to increase the proportion of its older population (65 years old and above) from 7 to 14 per cent. In Japan, the same process has occurred in 26 years (1970-1996). In Jamaica, it will take 18 years (2015-2033), and in Tunisia 15 years (2020-2035);

(g) By the end of this century, the majority of the world's older persons will be living in urban areas. It is projected that by the year 2000, almost 78 per cent of older women and more than 75 per cent of older men in more developed regions will be living in urban areas. The majority of older persons of both sexes in developing regions are expected to remain rural (about 58 per cent of women and 60 per cent of men);

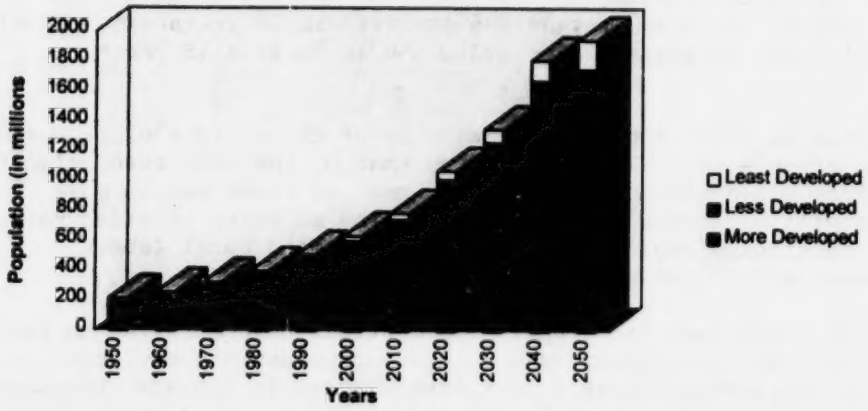
(h) Important short-term demographic fluctuations have occurred in recent years. In spite of their transitory nature, those fluctuations may, owing to their echo-effect, cause significant longer-term changes in the age structure of populations at the local, national or even regional levels, such as an unusual increase or decrease in the number of older persons (for instance, due to surges of refugees in sub-Saharan Africa), or an increase in the numbers of older widows (due to increased male mortality among the older working-age groups in several European countries in transition from centrally planned economies).

17. Population ageing has its specific features in developed and developing countries. In developed countries, it is the relative number of older persons that has the most significant implications. In developing countries, it is the absolute growth of older persons along with the speed of that growth that are most important.

18. Extended longevity (see figs. IV and V), which along with declining fertility is the universal cause of population ageing, affects both society and individuals. Implications for society are many and include impacts on patterns of production, consumption, savings and investment, as well as on labour market conditions and productivity, types of services required and patterns of public spending. Currently, the negative aspects of ageing, such as the increased costs of providing social services and benefits have been emphasized, while often ignoring the contribution that older persons can make to society, including its economic progress.

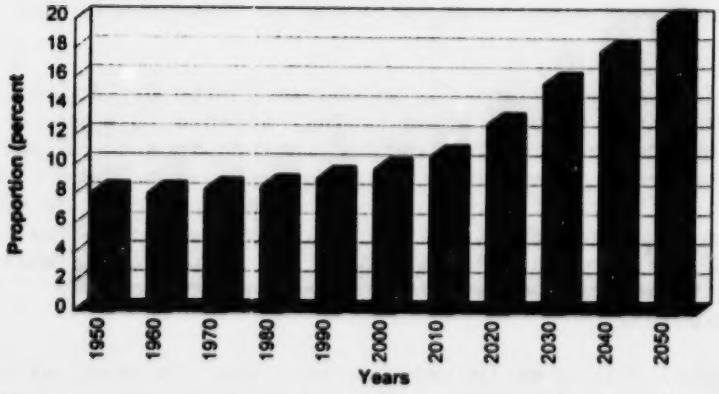
19. At the individual level, it is estimated that more than 20 years will be added to the average life of an individual by the end of this century. To take full advantage of that welcome gift of progress will require careful design of individual lifemaps, including the adoption of healthy life styles, adjustment of personal finances and planning for continuing education. Public policy should support such individual efforts.

Figure I. World population aged 60 and over, 1950-2050



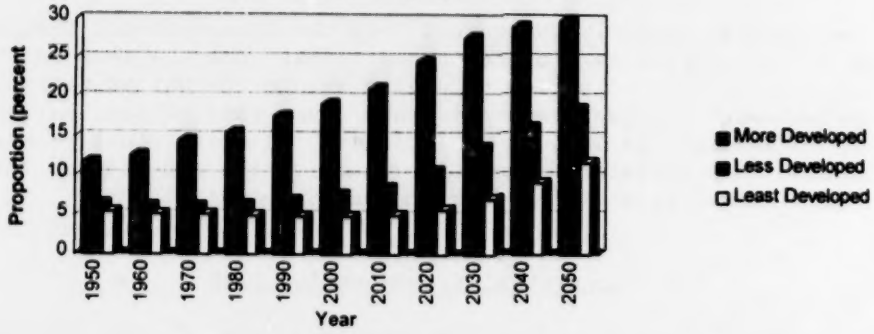
Source: United Nations Population Division, The Sex and Age Distribution of the World Populations (The 1994 Revision).

Figure II. Proportion of the world aged 60 and over, 1950-2050



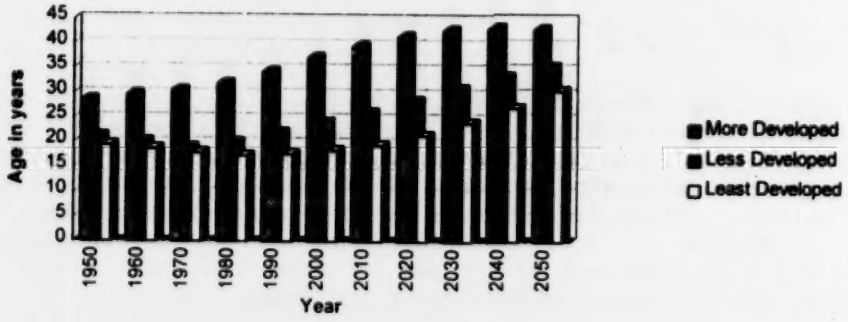
Source: United Nations Population Division, World Population Prospects (The 1994 Revision)

Figure III. Proportion of the population aged 60 and over, by country category, 1950-2050



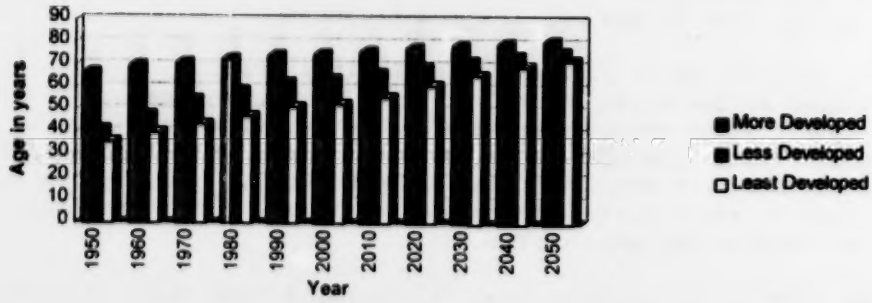
Source: United Nations Population Division, World Population Prospects (The 1994 Revision)

Figure IV. Median age by country category, 1950-2050



Source: United Nations Population Division, World Population Prospects (The 1994 Revision)

Figure V. Life Expectancy at birth for both sexes by country category, 1950-2050



Source: United Nations Population Division, World Population Prospects (The 1994 Revision)

III. INTERNATIONAL YEAR EXPANDS SCOPE OF DEBATE

20. Since the General Assembly designated 1999 the International Year of Older Persons (see its resolution 47/5 of 16 October 1992), preparations for the Year have provided a focus for activities on ageing within the United Nations system. A conceptual framework for the preparation and observance of the Year was submitted to the Assembly in 1995 (see A/50/114). An operational framework is under preparation to stimulate and coordinate activities and events, and to facilitate the dissemination of information about ageing.

A. Conceptual framework for 1999

21. The conceptual framework for the International Year of Older Persons, which the Assembly has invited States to adapt to national conditions (see its resolution 50/141), broadens the traditional approach to ageing. While continuing to address the situation of older persons and the relationship between development and the ageing of populations, it gives more weight than in the past to lifelong individual development and multigenerational relationships. The four facets are: (a) the situation of older persons; (b) lifelong individual development; (c) multigenerational relationships; and (d) development and the ageing of populations.

22. Current activities addressing the situation of older persons include the present exercise of review and appraisal, as well as the development of a data bank of national policies and programmes. The review and the data bank focus on sectoral arrangements for health, housing, education, employment, income security and welfare. These are intended to promote and improve the independence, participation, care, self-fulfilment and dignity of older persons, as set out in the United Nations Principles for Older Persons. Promotion of those Principles is the overall objective of the Year.

23. Lifelong individual development is being addressed in terms of changing life maps. For example, the life map of the industrial age, which comprised three successive stages - schooling in youth, work in adulthood and retirement in old age - is inadequate in an era requiring continuing education, work flexibility and an active as well as independent or self-supporting old age. A new life map is emerging, made up of periods of education, work and leisure mixed or blended in different proportions at different times in the individual's lifespan, giving rise to new policies and programmes.

24. If the years added to life are to be healthy, so must people's lifestyles, as was stressed at the First Joint Conference on Healthy Ageing (New York, April/May 1996), which was co-sponsored by the United Nations and the World Health Organization. The Conference was supported by Henkel Corporation, ASTA Medica and the New York Non-Governmental Organizations Committee on Ageing. It attracted some 40 media organizations and received worldwide publicity, including 40 minutes exposure on CNN.

25. In the area of multigenerational relations, a compendium of innovations and good practice is under preparation by the International Family Policy Forum of Canada.

26. The relationship between development and ageing of populations was highlighted at the major global conferences on economic, social and related issues held in the 1990s, as well as a number of expert meetings, including a meeting on issues of older persons in Eastern and Central Europe. The New York Non-Governmental Organizations Committee on Ageing, with some 50 member organizations, supported those conferences by preparing position papers, analysing draft documentation and expressing expert opinions on integrating ageing into the concerns of the International Conference on Population and Development, the World Summit for Social Development, the Fourth World Conference on Women and the United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II).

27. The above-mentioned meeting at Vienna on designing policy responses to ageing in Eastern and Central European countries reviewed the impact on older persons of the sudden transition from centrally planned to market economies. In some cases, they seem to have been worse off than the poor in many developing countries. The meeting recommended both short-term emergency initiatives and medium or long-term measures to deal with the situation.

28. In 1994, the World Bank published Averting the Old Age Crisis to draw attention to the inadequacy of traditional social security systems in the context of population ageing. The Bank recommended three security pillars: (a) a mandatory tax-financed public pillar designed to alleviate poverty and coinsure against a multitude of risks; (b) a mandatory fully funded but privately managed pillar (based on personal savings accounts or occupational plans) to handle people's savings; and (c) a supplementary voluntary pillar (again based on personal savings or occupational plans) for people who want more income and insurance. The Bank's recommendations and other analogous proposals have sparked a lively debate on the relative role of the saving, redistribution and insurance components in old-age security programmes, as well as the role of government in their development and management. In recent years. the search has intensified for new social security systems, including those incorporating traditional systems, and the importance of lifelong preparation for later years has grown.

29. In summary, the Year 1999 presents an opportunity to review and update traditional concepts of ageing. For example, each new cohort of older persons arrives at the age of 60 with its own particular expectations, capabilities and needs, as conditioned by earlier opportunities and obstacles. A broadening of education, work and leisure opportunities is changing not only old age but the entire life course, which in turn gives rise to new intergenerational relationships and roles. And as the proportion of those over age 60 changes from approximately 1 in 14 to 1 in 4 (sooner in developed countries but faster in developing countries), the interrelationship of ageing and development will become evident in economic, social, political and cultural areas.

B. Operational framework for 1999

30. As work continues on the four facets of the conceptual framework, an operational framework is being devised to help stimulate local, national and international initiatives and exchanges. To assist work at the governmental level, an ad hoc informal open-ended support group of the Commission for Social

Development was established in 1996 by the Economic and Social Council (see its decision 1996/242). The support group held an organizational meeting in October 1996 and a substantive meeting in December 1996; it is planning several follow-up meetings to raise awareness, stimulate debate, identify innovations and exchange information among States and between States and other social actors.

31. The Department for Policy Coordination and Sustainable Development of the United Nations Secretariat, as the United Nations focal point for the Year, has adapted its mandated activities in support of the Year. To promote local, national and international activities, the Department has issued the local agenda on ageing for the 1990s. It has launched a promotional newsletter, Countdown to 1999. It has opened on the Internet a compendium of international initiatives for 1999 (see the Department's home page at http:www.un.org/dpcsd/social policy and development; or gopher.undp.org/un secretariat/dpcsd/social policy and development). The Department has reformulated its Bulletin on Ageing to both promote the Year and simultaneously follow up on the World Summit for Social Development in the areas of poverty eradication, employment and social integration.

32. The Department manages the Trust Fund for Ageing, which in 1982 supported preparations for the World Assembly on Ageing and could again serve as a catalyst of 1999 activities, particularly the preparation of ageing adjustment programmes for the countries making the demographic transition. The Banyan Fund is another potential source of funding for the Year, having been incorporated in the United States of America in 1996 after its transfer from France.

33. Eight United Nations agencies and bodies, as well as numerous national and international non-governmental organizations, have reported preparations for the Year (see sect. VI below). The Secretary-General will report on those and other preparations to the General Assembly at its fifty-second session.

IV. IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PLAN OF ACTION AT THE NATIONAL LEVEL

A. Infrastructure

34. In the fourth review and appraisal, of the 55 reporting countries, 40 (76 per cent) have indicated that they have a national mechanism to develop and coordinate policies and programmes related to ageing. In the third review and appraisal, by contrast, of the 72 reporting countries and areas, 47 (65 per cent) indicated the existence of such national mechanisms (see table 1). In 1996, 16 of the 21 developed countries (76 per cent) have indicated that a national coordinating mechanism is in place compared with 24 of the 34 developing countries (73 per cent). While those replies represent a slight decline for developed countries, they represent a 14 per cent increase for developing countries from 1992 (see table 1). In the Plan of Action, it is recommended that such national mechanisms include representatives of the Government, non-governmental organizations and organizations managed for and by older persons. In the fourth review and appraisal, representatives of non-governmental organizations have been included in 31 (72 per cent) of the national coordinating mechanisms: 48 per cent in developed countries, and 62 per cent in developing countries, a slightly higher level than that reported in 1992.

Table 1. Infrastructure on ageing, based on replies to the 1996 questionnaires on the fourth review and appraisal of the implementation of the International Plan of Action on Ageing

Reporting issue	Replies from all countries and areas[a]			Replies from all developed countries and areas[a]			Replies from all developing countries and areas[a]		
	Yes	Total	%	Yes	Total	%	Yes	Total	%
National mechanism on ageing available	40 (47)	55 (72)	73 (65)	16 (14)	21 (16)	76 (87)	24 (33)	34 (56)	71 (59)
Government adopted a national plan or programme of action on ageing	27 (37)	55 (72)	50 (51)	8 (12)	21 (16)	38 (75)	19 (25)	34 (56)	56 (45)
Non-governmental organizations of and/or for older persons	48 (59)	55 (72)	87 (82)	20 (16)	21 (16)	95 (10)	28 (43)	34 (56)	82 (77)
Research centres dealing with ageing	24 (34)	55 (72)	44 (47)	14 (13)	21 (16)	67 (81)	10 (21)	34 (56)	29 (38)
Training centres and/or programmes dealing with ageing	22 (31)	55 (72)	40 (43)	9 (11)	21 (16)	43 (69)	13 (20)	34 (56)	38 (36)
Governmental dissemination of reports on ageing	21 (20)	55 (72)	38 (28)	13 (12)	21 (16)	62 (75)	8 (8)	34 (56)	24 (14)
Government designated 1 October as national day for older persons	36 (31)	55 (72)	66 (43)	12 (7)	21 (16)	57 (44)	24 (24)	34 (56)	71 (43)
Government designated a day other than 1 October as national day for older persons	8 (13)	55 (72)	15 (19)	2 (3)	21 (16)	10 (19)	6 (10)	34 (56)	18 (18)
Government promulgated the United Nations Principles for Older Persons	22 (18)	55 (71)	40 (25)	10 (6)	21 (16)	48 (38)	12 (12)	34 (55)	35 (22)
Government promulgated other legislation on rights of older persons	19 (27)	55 (71)	34 (38)	8 (8)	21 (16)	38 (45)	11 (19)	34 (55)	32 (35)

[a] 1992 figures in parentheses.

35. An equally important indicator of an ageing infrastructure is the presence of national programmes or plans of action on ageing. In approximately one half of the 55 countries included in the analysis, Governments have adopted national plans or programmes of action on ageing (see table 1). Compared with the 1992 review and appraisal, such plans were down significantly in developed countries (from 75 per cent to 38 per cent) but up in developing countries (from 45 to 56 per cent). In 52 of 55 countries reporting such national plans of action, the International Plan of Action on Ageing had been incorporated into those plans of action. Examples of that infrastructure include Finland, where the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health has set up a national committee to develop a national plan for ageing policy, which was published in 1996. In Japan there are two such plans. The first includes guidelines on policy for a society of longevity. The second is a revised 10-year strategy to promote the health and welfare of older persons, based on the basic act for aged society policy, which was developed in 1995.

36. Nearly 90 per cent of countries have reported the presence of non-governmental organizations of and/or for the older persons. That figure represents a slight increase since 1992, when 59 of the 72 countries so reported. While 95 per cent of the developed countries were able to identify such organizations, non-governmental organizations of and/or for the older persons were reported to be available in 82 per cent of the developing countries, a small increase from 1992 levels (see table 1). When such organizations were reported to be available in developing countries, 31 per cent reported only a single organization and 35 per cent reported three or more.

37. Twenty-four of the countries reported having research centres dealing with the ageing of populations (see table 1). Twenty-nine per cent of the developing countries participating in the fourth review and appraisal were able to identify such research centres (see table 1), compared with 38 per cent in 1992. Only four developing countries in the second review and appraisal reported having research centres. As in 1992, the majority of the centres appear to be university-based.

38. More than one third (22) of the countries that submitted replies for the fourth review and appraisal have acknowledged the availability of geriatric and gerontological training centres (see table 1). More than one third of the developing countries reported having national training centres (see table 1). The above data are consistent with the findings of the third review and appraisal. Interestingly, however, fewer developed countries (43 per cent in 1996 and 69 per cent in 1992) have reported the availability of such centres. Those training centres were both university-based and independent.

39. Eighty per cent of countries have reported the availability of national data collection systems that included age and gender-specific information; however, Governments have regularly produced and disseminated reports on the national ageing situation in only slightly more than one third of countries (see table 1). Twenty-four per cent of the developing countries have produced reports on the ageing situation, up from 14 per cent in 1992 (see table 1). About one quarter of the Governments, including 33 per cent of the developed and 21 per cent of the developing countries, have produced national directories of

public and private organizations concerned with ageing and/or services and opportunities for the aged.

40. In 36 of the 55 reporting countries, 1 October had been designated as national day for the older persons. In eight other countries, another day had been so designated. Thus, in 81 per cent of the reporting countries, including both developed and developing countries, there was reported to be a national day for older persons (see table 1), up from two thirds of the countries so reporting in 1992. In a few countries, a week or a month had been dedicated to older persons.

41. Twenty-two of the 55 reporting countries (40 per cent) had promulgated the United Nations Principles for Older Persons, a 15 per cent increase from 1992. While there was a 10 per cent increase reported from developed countries, developing countries reported an increase from 22 per cent to 35 per cent between 1992 and 1996 in promulgating the Principles for Older Persons. Nineteen countries had promulgated other legislation on the rights of the older persons (see table 1); for example, Turkey has supported social security and health-care legislation that ensures aged pensioners the right to health care.

42. Thus, over three quarters of the reporting countries had an identifiable national coordinating body or network for ageing, up from two thirds in 1992. Growth was most pronounced in developing countries. As in 1992, only half the countries have adopted a national plan and programme of action on ageing or have country-based research or training centres to deal with issues related to ageing. There are national data systems available, but reports on the national ageing situation are being produced in only one third of the countries. National directories of organizations concerned with ageing and aged persons continue to be available in only a few countries. Developing countries as a whole continue to lag significantly behind developed countries in building their infrastructure to deal with ageing issues. As noted in the third review and appraisal, awareness of ageing issues continues to grow, but development of the infrastructure necessary to support the translation of that awareness into action has remained a slow and uneven process.

B. Ageing and development

43. Nearly two thirds of all reporting countries, including more than 80 per cent of the developing countries, have reported the existence of a nationwide development plan. Individual and population ageing is reported to have been dealt with in nearly one half (25 countries) of their national development plans. In developing countries, 53 per cent reported that relationship, an increase of approximately 20 per cent since 1992. In addition, 13 countries, including a larger percentage of the developed than of the developing countries, have dealt with ageing in other forms of nationwide planning (see table 2).

Table 2. Impact of ageing on development, based on replies to the 1996 questionnaires on the fourth review and appraisal of the implementation of the International Plan of Action on Ageing

	Replies from all countries and areas[a]			Replies from all developed countries and areas[a]			Replies from all developing countries and areas[a]		
Reporting issue	Yes	Total	%	Yes	Total	%	Yes	Total	%
Nationwide development plan dealing specifically with ageing	25 (25)	55 (72)	46 (35)	7 (7)	21 (16)	33 (38)	18 (19)	34 (56)	53 (34)
No development plan: ageing dealt with in some other form of nationwide planning	13 (15)	55 (72)	24 (21)	7 (7)	21 (16)	33 (44)	6 (8)	34 (56)	18 (14)
Government identified impact of ageing									
On future size of workforce	34 (39)	55 (72)	62 (54)	16 (15)	21 (16)	76 (94)	18 (36)	34 (56)	53 (43)
On future costs of pensions	34 (51)	55 (72)	62 (71)	17 (15)	21 (16)	81 (94)	17 (36)	34 (56)	50 (64)
On future costs of institutional care	33 (41)	55 (72)	60 (57)	17 (14)	21 (16)	81 (88)	16 (27)	34 (56)	48 (48)
On consumption and its structure	23 (26)	55 (72)	42 (36)	11 (10)	21 (16)	52 (63)	12 (16)	34 (56)	35 (29)
On savings and investment	22 (27)	55 (72)	40 (38)	11 (10)	21 (16)	52 (63)	11 (17)	34 (56)	32 (31)
Government-supported programmes to integrate older persons									
Income-generating activities	26 (34)	55 (72)	47 (47)	7 (8)	21 (16)	33 (5)	19 (26)	34 (56)	56 (46)
Employment training and placement	23 (23)	55 (72)	42 (32)	9 (8)	21 (16)	43 (50)	14 (15)	33 (56)	41 (27)
Intergenerational activities	31 (40)	55 (72)	57 (56)	15 (11)	21 (16)	71 (69)	16 (29)	33 (56)	47 (52)

Reporting issue	Replies from all countries and areas[a]			Replies from all developed countries and areas[a]			Replies from all developing countries and areas[a]		
	Yes	Total	%	Yes	Total	%	Yes	Total	%
Older persons volunteer programmes	33 (43)	55 (72)	60 (60)	16 (12)	21 (16)	76 (75)	17 (31)	33 (56)	50 (55)
Participation of older persons in planning of services	25 (30)	55 (72)	46 (42)	12 (8)	21 (16)	57 (50)	13 (22)	34 (56)	38 (39)
Programmes developed by non-governmental organizations to integrate older persons									
Income-generating activities	26 (26)	55 (72)	48 (36)	7 (8)	21 (16)	33 (50)	19 (18)	34 (56)	56 (32)
Employment training and placement	25 (19)	55 (72)	46 (26)	9 (6)	21 (16)	43 (3)	16 (13)	34 (56)	47 (23)
Intergenerational activities	30 (34)	55 (72)	56 (47)	15 (12)	21 (16)	76 (75)	14 (22)	34 (56)	42 (39)
Older persons volunteer programmes	36 (36)	55 (72)	66 (50)	17 (11)	21 (16)	81 (31)	19 (25)	34 (56)	56 (45)

[a] 1992 figures in parentheses.

44. In the third review and appraisal, there was considerable evidence that Governments, in both developed and developing countries, had been assessing the impact of population ageing on future costs of pensions, future costs of institutional care and the future size of the workforce. At the time of the second review and appraisal, such studies were undertaken almost exclusively in developed countries. In the fourth review and appraisal, the trend for Governments to be studying the impact of ageing on policies and programmes continues to expand. Issues of workforce size, costs of institutional care, consumption and savings patterns have all seen increased attention. Only the future costs of pensions is surprisingly reported to have received less attention than in 1992 (see table 2).

45. In the third review and appraisal, Governments reported that they were involved with programmes that supported the integration of the older persons into mainstream development activities. That trend continued in the fourth review and appraisal. By 1996, government-supported income-generating activities in general remained at the same level as in 1992. At the same time, that index increased in developing countries and declined in developed ones.

Intergenerational and volunteer-supported activities were reported in more than half the countries, with higher levels of activities reported in developed countries and declining levels in developing countries. Forty-two per cent of countries reported the availability of programmes supporting employment training and placement services for older persons. The major increase in such support was reported principally in developing countries, while in developed countries a decline relative to the third review was noted (see table 2).

46. In the fourth review and appraisal, non-governmental organizations have generally been reported to be more involved in programmes for integrating the older persons into development activities than were Governments. This is a reversal from 1992, when non-governmental organizations were reported to be less involved in such development activities than Governments. While older persons volunteer programmes and intergenerational activities received the highest levels of attention, the contrast between developed and developing countries was significant. In developed countries, voluntarism and intergenerational activities predominated. In developing countries, income-generating and volunteer activities received equally high attention (56 per cent). Employment training activities were reported in 47 per cent and intergenerational activities in 42 per cent of developing countries (see table 2). In 1992, the focus had been on older persons volunteer programmes and intergenerational activities. In only one third or less of the countries were non-governmental organizations reported to be involved in income-generating and employment training and placement activities in 1992 (see table 2).

47. In conclusion, Governments and non-governmental organizations continue to be concerned about national development planning. However, the recognition by Governments and non-governmental organizations of the impact of ageing on development appears to be limited by such areas of inquiries as the potential costs of an ageing population, as measured by future costs of caring for frail older persons, future costs of pensions and the changing age structure of the workforce. Where programmes to facilitate the participation of older persons have been available, the major focus has been on expanding volunteer and intergenerational activities, particularly in developed countries. What does seem significant is that developing countries have expanded their recognition that older persons can be integrated into development through the expansion of income-generation activities, employment training and placement, and participation in the planning of services. In the case of developing countries, those activities have been receiving increased attention from both Governments and non-governmental organizations. Finally, the fourth review has revealed most of the prevailing tendencies in the approach of Governments and non-governmental organizations to ageing and development that became apparent in the previous third review.

C. Health and nutrition

48. Governments have been very active in promulgating the World Health Organization (WHO) "Health for all" campaign. In 1992, 90 per cent of reporting countries promulgated a "Health for all" campaign. In 1996, 84 per cent have so reported. In a major shift from the 1992 review and appraisal, in which nearly all the reporting developed countries indicated that they had introduced a prevention and/or rehabilitation programme to deal with age-specific disorders,

the 1996 review and appraisal has revealed that less than half the reporting developed countries have such a programme in place. On the other hand, over 40 per cent of developing countries have done so, so that they have remained constant between 1992 and 1996 (see table 3). Where such programmes have been introduced, they have focused on primary prevention (44 per cent), rehabilitation (33 per cent) and secondary prevention (29 per cent).

Table 3. Health and nutrition for the older persons, based on replies to the 1996 questionnaires on the fourth review and appraisal of the implementation of the International Plan of Action on Ageing

	Replies from all countries and areas[a]			Replies from all developed countries and areas[a]			Replies from all developing countries and areas[a]		
Reporting issue	Yes	Total	%	Yes	Total	%	Yes	Total	%
Prevention and/or rehabilitation programme to deal with age-specific disorders	23 (37)	55 (72)	42 (51)	9 (14)	21 (16)	47 (87)	13 (23)	34 (56)	41 (41)
Health care for persons aged 60 and over	26 (34)	55 (71)	47 (48)	14 (13)	21 (16)	67 (81)	12 (21)	34 (55)	35 (38)
Home health care for the older persons	28 (29)	55 (70)	50 (41)	18 (16)	21 (16)	86 (100)	10 (13)	34 (54)	29 (24)
Geriatric training	36 (45)	55 (72)	66 (62)	18 (16)	21 (16)	86 (100)	18 (29)	34 (56)	53 (52)

[a] 1992 figures in parentheses.

49. Health services specifically designed for persons 60 years of age and over are available in 26 countries. The availability of such services is reported in the majority of the developed countries, compared with only slightly over one third of the developing countries. Those numbers represent a decline from the findings of the 1992 review and appraisal (see table 3). As in 1992, less than one fourth of all the countries have reported services specifically designed for the very old (80 and over). Where health services designed for older persons were available, consistent with the reports in 1992, they focused on acute care hospital services, mental health services and primary health care. Again, as in the 1992 review, about one fourth of countries reported the availability of dental, eye and foot care for older persons.

50. Nearly every developed country has reported the availability of the home health care for the older persons. Twenty-nine per cent of the developing countries have home health care for the older persons, an increase from 24 per cent over 1992 levels (see table 3). Only about 10 per cent of all reporting countries, however, offer coverage to all their older persons

population. In the remaining countries, coverage offered varies from only a small portion to up to 25 per cent of the older persons population.

51. Eighty-six per cent of the developed countries have acknowledged the availability of geriatric training, compared with only slightly more than half the developing countries (see table 3). Where such training is available, the principal recipients, as in 1992, are nurses, physicians, social workers, physiotherapists, primary health workers and volunteers. Family-care workers are identified least often as the recipients of such training in both 1992 and 1996.

52. Health care remains a significant concern for Governments, as revealed by the number of countries promulgating the WHO "Health for all" campaign. As in 1992, many countries have difficulties in translating that ideal into practice for older persons. The fourth review and appraisal found that while developing countries are continuing their efforts to give attention to preventive and rehabilitative health care for the older persons, there seems to be declining interest in developed countries for such programmes. The fourth review has also found that in developing countries the availability of major health and care services for older persons, as well as of geriatric training, has in principle remained at the same rather insufficient level as was noted four years ago.

D. Housing and environment

53. In a reversal of the findings of the 1992 review and appraisal, when 88 per cent of countries reported the presence of a housing policy for older persons, less than two thirds of the developed countries (62 per cent) in 1996 stated that they had such a policy. In the case of developing countries, the drop was from 32 per cent to 18 per cent (see table 4). Consistent with the reports of 1992, the major directions of available housing policy for older persons are integrated housing, housing adapted to enable older persons to continue living in their own homes, and special segregated housing for the older persons.

54. Governments have continued to assume the major responsibility for providing housing and related support programmes for older persons. From one half to one third of Governments reported that they have supported programmes that include reduced transportation fares, public financing of housing, establishment of boarding homes, education for personal security in the home and community, coordination of housing with services and provision of transportation for the frail (see table 4). Non-governmental organizations continue to be most active in establishing boarding homes, education for personal security, and coordination of housing with community services. The adaptation of family housing for older persons has received minimal attention from both governmental and non-governmental organizations. In 1992, the lowest priority was attributed to the provision of transportation.

55. Thus, issues related to housing and the environment have received even less attention from both governmental and non-governmental organizations over the period 1992 to 1996. Where programmes are in place, Governments generally appear to have taken a much larger role than non-governmental organizations.

Table 4. Housing and environment for the older persons, based on replies to the 1996 questionnaires on the fourth review and appraisal of the implementation of the International Plan of Action on Ageing

Reporting issue	Replies from all countries and areas[a]			Replies from all developed countries and areas[a]			Replies from all developing countries and areas[a]		
	Yes	Total	%	Yes	Total	%	Yes	Total	%
Housing policy for the older persons	19 (32)	55 (72)	35 (44)	13 (14)	21 (16)	62 (88)	6 (18)	34 (56)	18 (32)
	Programme sponsor								
	Government[a]			Non-governmental organization[a]			Both Government and non-governmental organization[a]		
	Yes	Total	%	Yes	Total	%	Yes	Total	%
Programmes on housing or environment for older persons									
Adaptation of family housing to facilitate needs of older persons	13 (18)	55 (72)	24 (25)	6 (9)	55 (72)	11 (13)	3 (7)	55 (72)	6 (10)
Improvement of homes and public facilities	18 (29)	55 (72)	33 (40)	9 (12)	55 (72)	16 (17)	5 (10)	55 (72)	9 (14)
Public financing of housing	22 (21)	55 (72)	40 (29)	7 (7)	55 (72)	13 (10)	5 (7)	55 (72)	9 (10)
Establishment of boarding homes	21 (27)	55 (72)	38 (38)	19 (21)	55 (72)	35 (29)	11 (14)	55 (72)	20 (19)
Reduced transportation fares	28 (28)	55 (72)	51 (39)	3 (7)	55 (72)	6 (10)	2 (4)	55 (72)	4 (6)
Provision of transportation for the frail	19 (15)	55 (72)	35 (21)	9 (11)	55 (72)	16 (15)	7 (7)	55 (72)	13 (10)
Education of personal security in the home and the community	20 (21)	55 (72)	36 (29)	15 (12)	55 (72)	27 (17)	11 (10)	55 (72)	20 (14)
Coordination of housing with community services	19 (19)	55 (72)	35 (26)	13 (10)	55 (72)	24 (14)	11 (8)	55 (72)	20 (11)

[a] 1992 figures in parentheses.

E. Family

56. In the third review and appraisal, it was found that programmed activity in support of integrating the aged into families are quite limited. In the fourth review and appraisal, activities within that priority area of the International Plan of Action remain insufficient. Where there are programmes to integrate the older persons into the family, the major focus of programmes is the provision of social services for families with older persons, the education of family members to support the older persons and educational programmes to promote roles for the older persons in the family. From one third to one half of Governments report that they have such programmes. As might be expected, the developed countries have much higher levels of social services for families (81 per cent) than do developing countries (29 per cent). On the other hand, educational programmes to promote the roles of older persons are more evident in developing countries (44 per cent) than in developed countries (29 per cent). Interestingly, while only 16 per cent of countries reported availability of grants for multigenerational income-generating projects, 24 per cent of the developing countries so reported and only 5 per cent of the developed countries affirmed the presence of such programmes (see table 5).

Table 5. Families and the older persons, based on replies to the 1996 questionnaires on the fourth review and appraisal of the implementation of the International Plan of Action on Ageing

	Replies from all countries and areas[a]			Replies from all developed countries and areas[a]			Replies from all developing countries and areas[a]		
Reporting issue	Yes	Total	%	Yes	Total	%	Yes	Total	%
Programmes to integrate older persons into the family									
Grants to encourage multigenerational family-based income-generating projects	9 (16)	55 (70)	16 (23)	1 (4)	21 (15)	5 (27)	8 (12)	34 (55)	24 (22)
Educational programmes promoting roles of older persons in the family	21 (24)	55 (70)	38 (34)	6 (5)	21 (15)	29 (33)	15 (19)	34 (55)	44 (35)
Loans for dwelling improvement for families with older persons	4 (11)	55 (70)	7 (16)	4 (7)	21 (15)	19 (47)	0 (4)	34 (55)	0 (7)

Reporting issue	Replies from all countries and areas[a]			Replies from all developed countries and areas[a]			Replies from all developing countries and areas[a]		
	Yes	Total	%	Yes	Total	%	Yes	Total	%
Education of family members to support older persons	23 (23)	55 (70)	42 (33)	11 (9)	21 (15)	52 (60)	12 (14)	34 (55)	36 (26)
Social services for families with older persons	27 (35)	55 (70)	50 (50)	17 (13)	21 (13)	81 (87)	10 (22)	34 (55)	29 (40)
Rewards for family caregiving	12 (17)	55 (70)	22 (25)	11 (9)	21 (15)	52 (64)	1 (8)	34 (55)	3 (15)
Government-adopted measures to support older women	13 (22)	55 (72)	24 (31)	8 (6)	21 (16)	38 (38)	5 (16)	34 (56)	15 (29)

[a] 1992 figures in parentheses.

57. Only one fourth of countries report that special measures have been adopted to support older persons women and widows, down from one third reporting the presence of such measures in 1992 (see table 5).

58. In conclusion, it appears that the International Year of the Family (1994) has not brought a significant upsurge in programmes to integrate older persons into the family. It is interesting that the principal avenue for dealing with families and their ageing members in developed countries is through the provision of social services. Developing countries, in turn, appear to be focusing more of their attention on helping to find or ensure appropriate roles for older persons in the family context and teaching the family how better to support the family.

F. Social welfare

59. In the fourth review and appraisal, nearly three quarters of countries (40 of 55 countries) have indicated that they have social welfare services specifically designed for persons aged 60 and over, which represents an upward growth in such services over the years. In the second review and appraisal, the range of social services for the older persons was very limited in developing countries. In a major turn-around, in the third review and appraisal over two thirds of all countries and nearly two thirds of the developing countries have reported the availability of such services. In the fourth review and appraisal, the percentages reporting the availability of social welfare services in developing countries has grown slightly from 62 per cent in 1992 to 67 per cent (see table 6). In both the third and fourth review and appraisal, about one third of the countries in which such services were reported to be available also had services specifically designed for rural older persons. In the fourth

review and appraisal, only 20 per cent of the countries have reported social welfare services specifically designed for the very old (80 years and over).

60. The most frequently government-provided social welfare services for older persons in the fourth review and appraisal have included senior centres, food and clothing commodities, home help, and home-delivered and congregate meals. Telephone reassurance systems, respite care and transportation services are the least frequently provided services by reporting Governments. Governments and non-governmental organizations have played nearly equal roles in the provision of escort and transportation, food and clothing provisions and home-help services. Non-governmental organizations appear to have taken a more aggressive role in the provision of groups and home-delivered meals, clubs for the older persons, friendly visitors and telephone contact systems (see table 6). Thus, when a range of social welfare supports are available for older persons, it appears to come from a shared responsibility of Governments and non-governmental organizations.

61. As in both the second and the third review and appraisal, all developed countries and two thirds of developing countries reported that institutional facilities are available or planned for the older persons (see table 6). The average number of facilities reported by developed countries was about 2,500, ranging from countries with very few institutions to countries with over 15,000 institutions. For developing countries, the range was from 1 to 800 institutions reported by countries, with the average being about 90 institutions, except for China, which reported 43,000 institutional facilities. In the developing countries in which institutions for older persons are available, less than 2 per cent of older persons resided in such institutions, compared with 4.8 per cent in developed countries. Slightly more than one third of developed countries and only 15 per cent of developing countries reporting (compared with nearly one half in 1992) planned to expand available institutional facilities for older persons; one third of developed and one quarter of developing countries planned to restrict further construction of institutional facilities. Over two thirds of developed countries but less than one quarter of developing countries have made plans for the innovative designing or reorganizing of such facilities.

62. The fourth review and appraisal found that the majority of Governments (60 per cent) have promoted health and social services for older persons. The availability of such services appears to be expanding, with an important combination of sponsorships by both Governments and non-governmental organizations: nearly three quarters of Governments in developed and developing countries have reported working with non-governmental organizations in providing services for older persons. Governments have worked with non-governmental organizations in providing financial assistance, participating in joint planning, and coordinating the delivery of services to older persons.

Table 6. Welfare for the older persons, based on replies to the 1996 questionnaires on the fourth review and appraisal of the implementation of the International Plan of Action on Ageing

Reporting issue	Replies from all countries and areas[a]			Replies from all developed countries and areas[a]			Replies from all developing countries and areas[a]		
	Yes	Total	%	Yes	Total	%	Yes	Total	%
Social welfare services for older persons	40 (49)	55 (71)	73 (69)	17 (15)	21 (16)	81 (94)	23 (34)	34 (55)	67 (62)
Institutional facilities for older persons	44 (54)	55 (72)	80 (75)	21 (16)	21 (16)	100 (10)	23 (38)	34 (56)	67 (68)
	Service sponsor								
	Government[a]			Non-governmental organization[a]			Both Government and non-governmental organization[a]		
	Yes	Total	%	Yes	Total	%	Yes	Total	%
Type of social welfare service									
Senior and/or day-care centres	28 (35)	55 (72)	51 (49)	24 (29)	55 (72)	44 (40)	19 (25)	55 (72)	35 (35)
Meals-in group setting	15 (18)	55 (72)	27.8 (25)	21 (18)	55 (72)	38 (25)	12 (13)	55 (72)	22 (18)
Clubs for the older persons	15 (23)	55 (72)	27 (32)	27 (29)	55 (72)	49 (40)	12 (17)	55 (72)	22 (35)
Friendly visitors	15 (19)	55 (72)	27 (26)	26 (2)	55 (72)	47 (35)	10 (11)	55 (7)	18 (15)
Telephone contact systems	9 (13)	55 (72)	16 (18)	16 (14)	55 (72)	29 (19)	5 (8)	55 (72)	9 (11)
Escort and/or transportation services	13 (14)	55 (72)	23 (19)	13 (12)	55 (72)	23 (17)	7 (7)	55 (72)	13 (10)
Respite care	11 (15)	55 (72)	20 (21)	9 (14)	55 (72)	16 (19)	7 (10)	55 (72)	13 (14)
Food and clothing commodities	20 (23)	55 (72)	36 (32)	18 (22)	55 (72)	33 (31)	13 (13)	55 (72)	24 (32)
Home-delivered meals	16 (13)	55 (72)	29 (18)	18 (14)	55 (72)	33.3 (19)	10 (10)	55 (72)	18 (14)
Home help	20 (17)	55 (72)	36 (24)	21 (20)	55 (72)	38 (28)	13 (12)	55 (72)	24 (17)
Laundry services	13 (12)	55 (72)	24 (17)	11 (11)	55 (72)	20 (15)	8 (7)	55 (72)	14 (10)

[a] 1992 figures in parentheses.

G. Income security and employment

63. In the fourth review and appraisal, 33 of the 55 reporting countries (60 per cent) have reported a fixed retirement age, down slightly from 1992, when 65 per cent so reported. Twenty countries (36 per cent) have reported retirement age to be flexible. A slightly higher percentage of developing countries (62 per cent compared with 57 per cent) reported a fixed retirement age (see table 7). Even in countries in which the retirement age was fixed and compulsory, it was reported to vary, depending on gender and sector. As in the third review and appraisal, about one quarter of the Governments reporting expect modifications in retirement ages over the next few years.

64. Income security can be provided through pension and/or social security schemes. Over four fifths of developed countries (85 per cent), up from two thirds in 1992, and about one fourth of developing countries (27 per cent, a 5 per cent increase from 1992) have reported that they have universal coverage schemes. Limited coverage is available in 9 per cent of developed countries and close to two thirds of developing countries (see table 7). Some countries have reported the availability of both universal and limited coverage schemes. Interestingly, greater percentages of both developed and developing countries have reported the availability of universal coverage, and a lesser percentage have reported the availability of limited coverage in the fourth review and appraisal, compared with the third review and appraisal. By way of comparison, in the second review and appraisal slightly more than half the developing countries reported universal or limited pension and/or social security coverage.

65. The highest percentages of limited coverage are typically provided for salary earners, government employees, disabled older persons and veterans. As in 1992, the sectors with the lowest reported coverage include agricultural workers and older women. Governments have reported that special protection is provided to women as part of pension policies in about two thirds of developed countries and less than one third of developing countries. Those findings are very close to 1992 levels. In countries that provide protection for older women, such policies include homemaker credits, early retirement stipulations and survivor pensions. Approximately two thirds of developed countries have reported that their retirement schemes cover 100 per cent of the population 60 years of age and older. Only one developing country has reported having a retirement scheme that covers as much as 50 per cent of the older persons population.

66. Forty-four per cent of responding countries, up from 34 per cent in 1992, have reported the availability of policies targeting the neediest older persons by providing minimum benefits. Over four fifths of developed countries (85 per cent) have indicated that they have policies and/or programmes to ensure that minimum benefits are available. As in 1992, less than one fifth of developing countries (18 per cent) have reported the availability of such benefits (see table 7).

Table 7. Income security and employment for the older persons, based on replies to the 1996 questionnaires on the fourth review and appraisal of the implementation of the International Plan of Action on Ageing

Reporting issue	Replies from all countries and areas[a]			Replies from all developed countries and areas[a]			Replies from all developing countries and areas[a]		
	Yes	Total	%	Yes	Total	%	Yes	Total	%
Retirement age									
Flexible	20 (25)	55 (71)	36 (35)	9 (7)	21 (16)	42 (44)	11 (19)	34 (55)	32 (34)
Fixed	33 (45)	55 (71)	60 (65)	12 (9)	21 (16)	57.1 (56)	21 (36)	34 (55)	62 (66)
Income security									
Universal coverage	27 (22)	55 (70)	49 (31)	18 (10)	21 (16)	85 (63)	9 (12)	34 (55)	27 (22)
Limited coverage	22 (43)	55 (70)	40 (61)	2 (7)	21 (16)	9 (44)	20 (36)	34 (55)	59 (67)
Policy to ensure that minimum benefits are met	24 (24)	55 (71)	44 (34)	18 (14)	21 (16)	85 (88)	5 (10)	34 (55)	18 (18)

Reporting issue	Sponsor of measure								
	Government[a]			Non-governmental organization[a]			Both Government and non-governmental organization[a]		
	Yes	Total	%	Yes	Total	%	Yes	Total	%
Measures to assist the older persons in finding employment									
Creation of full or part-time employment	15 (21)	55 (72)	27 (29)	10 (12)	55 (72)	18 (17)	8 (10)	55 (72)	15 (14)
Income-generating activities	11 (19)	55 (72)	20 (26)	14 (13)	55 (72)	26 (72)	9 (8)	55 (72)	16 (11)
Self-employment schemes	9 (14)	55 (72)	16 (19)	12 (8)	55 (72)	22 (11)	5 (5)	55 (72)	9 (7)
Cooperatives for the older persons	9 (15)	55 (72)	16 (21)	12 (10)	55 (72)	22 (14)	7 (5)	55 (72)	13 (7)
Provision of job training	11 (15)	55 (72)	20 (21)	10 (8)	55 (72)	18 (11)	7 (4)	55 (72)	13 (6)

Reporting issue	Sponsor of measure								
	Government[a]			Non-governmental organization[a]			Both Government and non-governmental organization[a]		
	Yes	Total	%	Yes	Total	%	Yes	Total	%
Promotion of methods to identify suitable employment opportunities	13 (12)	55 (72)	24 (17)	9 (8)	55 (72)	16 (11)	6 (6)	55 (72)	11 (8)
Promotion of the development of microenterprises	7 (14)	55 (72)	13 (19)	14 (8)	55 (72)	25 (11)	6 (6)	55 (72)	11 (8)

[a] 1992 figures in parentheses.

67. At the same time, many older persons desire and are able to provide for their own income security through employment. Public policy can therefore be made available to promote employment through a variety of measures, including job training or retraining, job placement, job development and protecting older persons from age discrimination in employment. In 1992, approximately 25 per cent of countries reported that they had implemented measures to assist older persons in finding or returning to active employment. In 1996, that number increased to 47 per cent. Government measures to support employment for older persons have included creating full or part-time employment opportunities (27 per cent), developing methods to find suitable employment for older persons (24 per cent), creating income-generating activities and providing job training (20 per cent each). Non-governmental organizations, although their activities have been limited, have been more active in promoting income-generating activities (26 per cent of the countries), the development of microenterprises (25 per cent), and the establishment of cooperatives for older persons and self-employment schemes (22 per cent) (see table 7). In the third review and appraisal, only one fifth of countries reported the availability of policies, programmes and/or legislation to prevent age discrimination in employment. In the fourth review and appraisal, over one quarter of all countries have reported such measures.

H. Education

68. The fourth review and appraisal has found that from one third to one half of Governments reporting have programmes in adult education, literacy education, special fees for admission to cultural institutions, handicraft workshops and community-based recreation programmes for older persons. Countries have also reported that non-governmental organizations are involved in one third to one half of programmes promoting educational activities, including handicraft workshops, community-based recreation, adult education, physical/rehabilitation, access to educational facilities and pre-retirement training. As in 1992, only 10 countries have reported government-sponsored programmes to make available

third-age universities. However, 14 countries in both the third and fourth reviews and appraisals have reported that non-governmental organizations have established such universities (see table 8).

Table 8. Education for the older persons, based on replies to the 1996 questionnaires on the fourth review and appraisal of the implementation of the International Plan of Action on Ageing

Reporting issue	Replies from all countries and areas[a]			Replies from all developed countries and areas[a]			Replies from all developing countries and areas[a]		
	Yes	Total	%	Yes	Total	%	Yes	Total	%
Programmes to education the general public on ageing	23 (33)	55 (71)	42 (46)	5 (8)	21 (16)	23 (50)	18 (25)	34 (55)	53 (45)
	Programme sponsor								
	Government[a]			Non-governmental organization[a]			Both Government and non-governmental organization[a]		
	Yes	Total	%	Yes	Total	%	Yes	Total	%
Educational programmes									
Pre-retirement training	15 (22)	55 (72)	27 (31)	18 (20)	55 (72)	33 (28)	9 (14)	55 (72)	16 (19)
Physical education and/or rehabilitation	15 (25)	55 (72)	27 (35)	19 (20)	55 (72)	34 (28)	11 (13)	55 (72)	20 (18)
Literacy education	20 (27)	55 (72)	36 (38)	16 (19)	55 (72)	29 (26)	11 (12)	55 (72)	20.4 (17)
Adult education	24 (37)	55 (72)	43 (51)	19 (27)	55 (72)	35 (38)	13 (17)	55 (72)	24 (24)
Establishment of third-age universities	10 (10)	55 (72)	18 (14)	14 (14)	55 (72)	25 (19)	4 (6)	55 (72)	7 (8)
Access to universities	17 (21)	55 (72)	31 (29)	12 (10)	55 (72)	22 (14)	6 (8)	55 (72)	11 (11)
Access to community-based educational facilities	16 (24)	55 (72)	29 (33)	19 (17)	55 (72)	34 (24)	11 (14)	55 (72)	20 (19)
Community-based recreation-oriented programme	20 (26)	55 (72)	36 (36)	25 (27)	55 (72)	46 (38)	15 (18)	55 (72)	27 (25)

	Programme sponsor								
	Government[a]			Non-governmental organization[a]			Both Government and non-governmental organization[a]		
	Yes	Total	%	Yes	Total	%	Yes	Total	%
Reduced admission fees to cultural institutions	21 (30)	55 (72)	38 (42)	11 (13)	55 (72)	20 (18)	7 (10)	55 (72)	13 (14)
Special workshops in handicrafts	20 (22)	55 (72)	36 (31)	21 (21)	55 (72)	42 (29)	16 (11)	55 (72)	29 (15)
Older persons function as teachers and/or leaders in:									
Evaluation, recording, and transmission of cultural heritage	19 (18)	55 (72)	34 (25)	22 (19)	55 (72)	40 (26)	11 (8)	55 (72)	20 (11)
Training for employment	10 (12)	55 (72)	18 (17)	16 (14)	55 (72)	29 (19)	8 (8)	55 (72)	14 (11)
Intergenerational projects	13 (17)	55 (72)	24 (24)	22 (20)	55 (72)	40 (28)	10 (8)	55 (72)	18 (11)
Education of mentally retarded children	7 (6)	55 (72)	13 (8)	14 (12)	55 (72)	26 (17)	7 (3)	55 (72)	13 (4)
Language classes and cultural activities for immigrants	5 (5)	55 (72)	9 (7)	8 (12)	55 (72)	14 (17)	3 (4)	55 (72)	5 (6)
Art, drama, music, handicraft classes	14 (19)	55 (72)	25 (26)	21 (19)	55 (72)	38 (26)	11 (5)	55 (72)	20 (7)
Literacy education	10 (9)	55 (72)	18 (13)	12 (10)	55 (72)	21 (14)	4 (2)	55 (72)	7 (3)

[a] 1992 figures in parentheses.

69. As in the third review and appraisal, between 30 and 50 per cent of countries have reported in the fourth review that Governments and non-governmental organizations have involved older persons as evaluators, teachers and transmitters of cultural heritage, leaders of intergenerational projects, and teachers and/or leaders in fine arts and/or handicraft classes. Older persons are less involved in language acquisition classes, literacy education and working with special populations of children. It is interesting that non-governmental organizations are reported to be involving more older

transmission of culture; employment training; intergenerational projects; art, drama and handicraft classes; and the education of special populations of children (see table 8).

70. As populations age, the education of the general public about ageing becomes increasingly important. Forty-two per cent of countries reported the availability of such programmes, approximately the same percentage as was reported in 1992. It is particularly significant, however, that 53 per cent of developing countries reported such activities (see table 8): it is those countries where the onset of the demographic transition will have its greatest impact over the next decades. Where such programmes are available, Governments have reported that they deal primarily with the mass media and non-governmental organizations. The majority of countries have reported that they work with the educational systems, mainly at the primary and secondary levels, to provide education on ageing. This is in contrast to the third review and appraisal, in which the principal educational systems involved were post-secondary. Where education on ageing is present, the principal themes that are emphasized are the health and social needs of older persons, older persons as a societal and community resource, and intergenerational solidarity. Areas receiving significant but less attention are the need to support frail older persons and the special needs of caregivers, especially those in the family.

V. IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PLAN OF ACTION AT THE INTERNATIONAL LEVEL

A. Activities

71. The Department for Policy Coordination and Sustainable Development of the United Nations Secretariat serves as the global focal point on ageing, including coordinating preparations for the International Year of Older Persons, 1999. It coordinates activities of the United Nations entities concerned with ageing issues and cooperates with the global network of national coordinating mechanisms on ageing, as well as national and international non-governmental organizations, including the non-governmental organization committees on ageing in New York and Vienna. Since the previous review and appraisal, the Department has extensively explored opportunities to involve non-traditional actors, such as academia, the media and private business, particularly in the context of preparations for the International Year of Older Persons.

72. For the fourth review and appraisal, as for the third, United Nations entities were asked to indicate the types and levels of activities that they have undertaken to assist in implementing the Plan of Action. Thirteen entities submitted replies, compared with 14 in 1992. Only 2 of the 13 entities that replied in 1996 have indicated that they have incorporated programmes on ageing into their medium-term plans, down from 6 in 1992, and only one identified a relevant programme budget for the current biennium. Nine of the 13 entities, however, have designated a focal point for programmes related to ageing, and nine have reported that they have collaborated with non-governmental agencies on projects related to ageing (see table 9). Seven of the entities indicated that they would participate in future inter-agency meetings on ageing.

Table 9. International activities on ageing: United Nations entities, based on replies to the 1996 questionnaires on the fourth review and appraisal of the implementation of the International Plan of Action on Ageing

Reporting issue	All United Nations entities[a] Yes	Total	%
Programme on ageing incorporated in current medium-term plan	2 (6)	13 (14)	15 (43)
Focal point on ageing designated	9 (12)	13 (14)	69 (86)
Collaboration with non-governmental organizations on ageing-related projects	9 (11)	13 (14)	69 (78)
Activities on ageing engaged in since 1992			
Research	10 (9)	13 (14)	77 (64)
Publications	9 (7)	13 (14)	69 (50)
Reports	7 (7)	13 (14)	54 (50)
Development assistance	2 (4)	13 (14)	15 (29)
Advisory services	4 (5)	13 (14)	31 (36)
Training	3 (3)	13 (14)	23 (21)
Meetings	7 (4)	13 (14)	54 (29)
Database(s)	3 (4)	13 (14)	23 (29)
Activities undertaken to identify impact of ageing on national budgets or developmental activities			
Future size and distribution of older persons population	3 (3)	13 (14)	23 (21)
Future size of workforce	4 (2)	13 (14)	31 (14)
Future costs of pensions	2 (1)	13 (14)	15 (7)
Future costs of health care and social services for older persons	2 (4)	13 (14)	15 (29)
Consumption and its structure	1 (4)	13 (14)	8 (29)

Reporting issue	All United Nations entities[a] Yes	Total	%
Savings and investment	1 (3)	13 (14)	8 (21)
Projects undertaken to integrate the older persons into mainstream development activities			
Income-generating activities	1 (3)	13 (14)	8 (21)
Employment training and placement	1 (3)	13 (14)	8 (21)
Intergenerational activities	2 (3)	13 (14)	15 (21)
Older persons volunteer programmes	1 (4)	13 (14)	8 (29)
Educational and/or cultural programmes	13 (3)	13 (14)	100 (21)
Participation of the older persons in planning and development of services	2 (1)	13 (14)	15 (7)

[a] 1992 figures in parentheses.

73. The United Nations entities have reported that they have maintained a significant involvement in activities related to ageing since the third review and appraisal; at least half have been involved in research, publications, meetings and in the production of reports related to ageing. As in the third review and appraisal, development assistance, training, database development and advisory services have received less attention (see table 9).

74. Again, as with the third review and appraisal, United Nations entities have reported in the fourth review and appraisal that they have given some attention to the impact of individual and/or population ageing on a range of topics, including the future size of the workforce and the future size and distribution of the older persons population. Those areas of concerns are somewhat different from concerns in 1992, when more attention was given to the impact of ageing on consumption patterns and the future costs of health and social services. Activities related to the future cost of pensions, consumption and savings, and investment patterns are reported to have received the attention of only one or two entities. Limited attention has been given to projects for integrating the older persons into mainstream development. Where undertaken, most such projects have focused on educational and/or cultural programmes for older persons. United Nations entities reported less participation than in the third review and appraisal in the areas of income-generating activities, employment training and placement, and older persons volunteer programmes (see table 9).

75. In implementing the International plan of Action, the Department for Policy Coordination and Sustainable Development also cooperates with an international

network of non-governmental organizations, both dealing directly with older persons and serving other population groups. For the third review and appraisal, 23 non-governmental organizations submitted replies to a questionnaire on their activities. For the fourth review and appraisal, 55 non-governmental organizations replied. Forty-two of them (76 per cent) have reported that they have adopted a plan of action on ageing, and 27 (49 per cent) have set up an internal mechanism to develop and coordinate activities related to ageing. Half to two thirds of the organizations have been involved in activities related to ageing, including issuing publications, doing research, providing advisory services and training, participating in meetings and producing reports. As in the third review and appraisal, database development and development assistance are the least often reported activities (see table 10).

76. A number of the non-governmental organizations have reported that they have undertaken activities to identify the impact of ageing on national budgets and/or development. The major areas of concern are issues related to the future size and distribution of the older persons population, future costs of health care and social services for older persons, the future cost of pensions and the future size of the workforce. Non-governmental organizations have reported that they have been active in developing and supporting programmes for integrating older persons into mainstream development activities. Between one third and two thirds of all reporting organizations have reported that they had been engaged in intergenerational projects, older persons volunteer programmes, educational programmes and activities for older persons and services providers, educational and cultural programmes with older persons, and programmes involving older persons in the planning and development of services. Slightly less than one third of organizations have reported that they have been involved in income-generating activities and employment training and placement activities for the older persons (see table 10).

77. The clear message of the fourth review and appraisal is that there are numerous non-governmental organizations who are interested in and very active participants in a wide range of age-related activities. This is significantly different from the third review and appraisal, when only 23 organizations responded, many of which did not appear to be actively engaged in age-related activities. Tapping and maintaining the commitment, interest and expertise of those organizations is a major challenge and opportunity in fully implementing the Plan of Action. As reported in the third review and appraisal, many of those organizations, including the International Federation of Associations of Older Persons, the International Social Security Association, the American Association of Retired Persons, HelpAge International and the European Federation for the Welfare of Older Persons have reported that they have engaged in such activities as research; publications; meetings and consultations; older persons volunteer programmes involving ageing-related income-generating activities; and older persons employment development activities.

Table 10. International activities on ageing: non-governmental organizations, based on replies to the 1996 questionnaires on the fourth review and appraisal of the implementation of the International Plan of Action on Ageing

Reporting issue	All non-governmental organizations[a]		
	Yes	Total	%
Plan of action on ageing adopted	42 (9)	53 (23)	81 (39)
Internal mechanism set up to develop and coordinate ageing-related activities	27 (7)	53 (23)	51 (30)
Activities on ageing implemented since 1992			
Research	32 (7)	53 (23)	60 (30)
Publications	37 (9)	53 (23)	70 (39)
Reports	26 (7)	53 (23)	49 (30)
Development assistance	18 (6)	53 (23)	34 (26)
Advisory services	31 (5)	53 (23)	58 (22)
Training	31 (6)	53 (23)	58 (26)
Meetings	31 (7)	53 (23)	58 (30)
Database(s)	15 (4)	53 (23)	28 (17)
Activities undertaken to identify impact of ageing on national budgets or developmental activities			
Future size and distribution of older persons population	20 (2)	53 (23)	38 (9)
Future size of workforce	13 (1)	53 (23)	24 (4)
Future costs of pensions	13 (2)	53 (23)	24 (9)
Future costs of health care and social services for the older persons	20 (3)	53 (23)	28 (13)

Reporting issue	All non-governmental organizations[a]		
	Yes	Total	%
Consumption and its structure	8 (0)	53 (23)	15 (0)
Savings and investment	11 (1)	53 (23)	21 (4)
Projects undertaken to integrate the older persons into mainstream development activities			
Income-generating activities	15 (4)	53 (23)	28 (17)
Employment training and placement	17 (3)	53 (23)	32 (13)
Intergenerational activities	36 (9)	53 (23)	68 (39)
Older persons volunteer programmes	33 (10)	53 (23)	62 (43)
Educational and/or cultural programmes	31 (8)	53 (23)	58 (35)
Participation of the older persons in planning and development of services	22 (7)	53 (23)	42 (30)
Educational/activities/programmes	32[b]	53[b]	60[b]

[a] 1992 figures in parentheses.

[b] Not asked in 1992.

B. Priorities for cooperation

78. International cooperation through a range of support activities is one of the essential elements necessary to ensure that the goals of the Plan of Action will be achieved. Governments were asked to identify if they had received any international assistance in establishing programmes and projects on ageing over the past few years, whether they anticipated seeking such assistance, and if so in what priority areas. As in the third review and appraisal, about one third of the Governments have stated that, in developing or implementing their policies and programmes on ageing, they have received assistance from either international governmental or non-governmental organizations. As might be suspected, a much higher percentage of developing countries (44 per cent) than developed countries (19 per cent) have reported that they have received some international assistance in support of their programmes on ageing.

79. Despite the limited nature of the international assistance received, more than three quarters of developing countries and one third of developed countries reporting have anticipated a need for international cooperation in the form of direct assistance (technical, educational or financial) to establish or expand age specific policies and programmes over the next four years. That level is down slightly (60 per cent from 72 per cent) from the anticipated needs reported by all participated countries in 1992. Developed countries have attached the highest priority to policy and programme formulation, analysis of the implications of population ageing on development, and the exchange of knowledge and experience. Developing countries, with their significantly higher levels of anticipated interest in international cooperation and assistance, have focused, in order of priority, on the establishment of income-generating projects, training of health-care providers, formulation of policies and programmes on ageing, exchange of knowledge and information, and establishment of health-care services for older persons. For all countries and areas included in the analysis, the areas in which assistance is sought through international cooperation are listed below, in order of priority (see table 11):

(a) Establishment of income-generating projects for older persons;

(b) Exchange of knowledge and experience;

(c) Formulation and evaluation of policies and programmes on ageing;

(d) Research and policy analysis on the implications of population ageing for development;

(e) Establishment of health-care services for older persons;

(f) Training of health-care providers for older persons;

(g) Data collection and processing;

(h) Establishment of educational, cultural and training projects for older persons;

(i) Establishment of volunteer programmes for older persons;

(j) Training of indigenous scholars on ageing.

80. The priority areas in which assistance will be sought have remained consistent in both the third and the fourth review and appraisal. Although already an important priority in the third review and appraisal, it is interesting that the establishment of income-generating projects has been identified as the highest priority in the fourth review and appraisal. That may reflect the concerns that developing countries have expressed throughout the questionnaire about expanding the role of and opportunities for older persons in development. Countries continue to be interested in the knowledge and expertise exchange, seeking to establish what they can learn from one another. Concerns about policy and programme formulation, as well as research on the interplay of population ageing and development, remain high priority concerns. On the other hand, the establishment of volunteer programmes and educational and cultural

projects for older persons, although important, do not appear to be high on the priority list for international assistance by countries. It is clear that many Governments anticipate a need for international cooperation and assistance in addressing ageing concerns. There is clearly a significant challenge and opportunity for international agencies, both governmental and non-governmental, to provide the support that will help countries, in both the public and private sectors, respond to the range of identified priority concerns.

Table 11. International cooperation in the field of ageing, based on replies to the 1996 questionnaires on the fourth review and appraisal of the implementation of the International Plan of Action on Ageing

	Replies from all countries and areas[a]			Replies from all developed countries and areas[a]			Replies from all developing countries and areas[a]		
Reporting issue	Yes	Total	%	Yes	Total	%	Yes	Total	%
Government received international assistance for programmes and projects on ageing	19 (23)	55 (70)	35 (33)	4 (2)	21 (16)	19 (12)	15 (21)	34 (54)	44 (39)
Government received assistance from international non-governmental organizations	18 (22)	55 (69)	33 (32)	5 (2)	21 (16)	24 (12)	13 (20)	34 (53)	38 (38)
Government anticipates need for international cooperation in the form of direct assistance in ageing in the next four years	33 (49)	55 (68)	60 (72)	7 (5)	21 (16)	33 (31)	26 (44)	34 (52)	77 (85)

Overall priority areas for international cooperation in the form of direct assistance in ageing in next four years

	Replies from all countries and areas				
	High priority accorded by the Government		Low priority accorded by the Government		
	Yes	%	Yes	%	Total
Formulation and evaluation of policies and programmes on ageing	27 (28)	73 (78)	5 (8)	14 (22)	37 (36)
Training of indigenous scholars on ageing	17 (25)	49 (68)	9 (12)	26 (32)	35 (37)

	Replies from all countries and areas				
	High priority accorded by the Government		Low priority accorded by the Government		
	Yes	%	Yes	%	Total
Training of health-care providers for older persons	23 (31)	66 (78)	9 (9)	26 (22)	35 (40)
Data collection and processing	21 (30)	66 (79)	7 (8)	22 (21)	32 (38)
Research and analysis on the implications of population ageing for development	23 (32)	68 (80)	6 (8)	18 (20)	34 (40)
Establishment of income-generating projects for older persons	25 (30)	78 (81)	3 (7)	9 (19)	32 (37)
Establishment of health-care services for older persons	22 (30)	67 (75)	6 (10)	18 (25)	33 (40)
Establishment of educational, cultural and training projects for older persons	20 (22)	61 (59)	9 (15)	27 (41)	33 (37)
Establishment of volunteer programmes for older persons	20 (24)	61 (63)	10 (14)	30 (37)	33 (38)
Exchange of knowledge and experience	24 (35)	75 (83)	5 (7)	16 (17)	32 (42)

[a] 1992 figures in parentheses.

VI. PREPARATION FOR THE INTERNATIONAL YEAR OF OLDER PERSONS, 1999

81. In preparation for the International Year of Older Persons in 1999, countries were asked to identify the focal point that would liaise with the United Nations and act as a catalyst for multilevel collaboration for the Year. Of the 55 countries that participated in the review, 18 (8 developed and 10 developing countries) have identified a national focal point for the Year. Those countries have also indicated a preliminary estimation of the relevance of the four facets of the conceptual framework for the Year (see table 12). Of the developed countries reporting, all expressed support for the four facets of the conceptual framework. Only the development and ageing of populations was noted as not relevant by one country. The same pattern held for developing countries, with one country viewing lifelong individual development and another development and the ageing of populations as not relevant. In both developed and developing countries, the situation of older persons was most often identified as especially relevant.

Table 12. Relevance of the conceptual framework for preparations for the International Year of Older Persons to countries that participated in the fourth review and appraisal

Facets of the conceptual framework	Developed countries				Developing countries			
	Especially relevant	Relevant	Not relevant	No response	Especially relevant	Relevant	Not relevant	No response
Situation of older persons	4	1	0	3	7	0	0	3
Lifelong individual development	3	2	0	3	4	2	1	3
Multigenerational relationships	3	2	0	3	1	6	0	3
Development and the ageing of populations	3	1	1	3	3	3	1	3

82. Within the United Nations system, nine focal points for the International Year of Older Persons have been identified: including the Division for Advancement of Women of the United Nations Secretariat; the Economic Commission for Africa; the Economic Commission for Europe; the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia; the International Labour Organization; the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women; the International Monetary Fund; the United Nations International Drug Control Programme; and the World Health Organization. Twelve United Nations entities have assessed the relevance of the four facets of the conceptual framework, three of which have indicated that each of the four facets was relevant or especially relevant (see table 13).

83. Non-governmental organizations appear to have a significant interest and commitment to the International Year. Sixteen non-governmental organizations have identified at least one focal point for the Year. Among those organizations, 11 have indicated that projects or studies will be undertaken in three areas of the conceptual framework: the situation of older persons; lifelong individual development; and the relationship between population ageing and development (see table 14). Eight organizations are planning projects or studies on multigenerational relationships. That very active agenda includes projects or studies ranging from international to country-specific in scope. At the international level, they will address, among other issues, issues of raising an awareness of ageing at international events, older women, and exploring the images of ageing. Several major international non-governmental organizations concerned with ageing, including the American Association of Retired Persons, the International Association of Gerontology, the International Federation on Ageing, and the International Federation of Associations of Older Persons, have begun activities for the Year. At the country level, priority issues have included multigenerational relations, caring for the aged, reducing poverty among the aged, creating a better understanding of the situation of older persons, establishing an active agenda on ageing, and developing a country-wide process for implementing the United Nations Principles for Older Persons.

Table 13. Relevance of the conceptual framework for preparations for the International Year of Older Persons to the work of United Nations specialized agencies or bodies that participated in the fourth review and appraisal

Facets of the conceptual framework	Especially relevant	Relevant	Not relevant	No response
Situation of older persons	6	3	2	1
Lifelong individual development	5	5	1	1
Multigenerational relationships	8	2	2	0
Development and the ageing of populations	6	4	2	0

Table 14. Relevance of the conceptual framework for preparations for the International Year of Older Persons to the work of non-governmental organizations that participated in the fourth review and appraisal

Facets of the conceptual framework	Especially relevant or relevant[a]
Situation of older persons	11
Lifelong individual development	11
Multigenerational relationships	8
Development and the ageing of populations	11

[a] Non-governmental organizations, unlike countries and United Nations entities, were not asked to rate the relevance of facets of the conceptual framework.

VII. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

84. Fifty-five countries responded to the 1996 questionnaire, on which the latest findings are based; 72 countries participated in the 1992 questionnaire. Annex I shows which countries responded to each of the four reviews undertaken to date. Only 12 countries, it may be noted, have responded to all four questionnaires (7 developed and 5 developing countries).

85. The findings of each review have been consistent: each showed that some modest progress had been made in implementing the Plan of Action; however, implementation remains a largely incomplete task, particularly in developing countries.

86. Thirteen United Nations entities (see annex II) and 55 non-governmental organizations (see annex III) also responded to the questionnaire. Their contributions provide a background to appraising the activities of States. In many cases, States have engaged the non-governmental sector in programme planning and implementation at the national level. The organizations and bodies of the United Nations system have acted as an early warning system for demographic ageing, on the one hand, and as forums for the elaboration of standards, facilitated by the exchange of innovations and good practices, on the other. Some have provided technical assistance to developing countries.

87. As of December 1996, 18 countries (8 developed and 10 developing) have reported establishing national focal points for the International Year of Older Persons, as have eight United Nations entities and 16 non-governmental organizations. It is envisaged that, as part of the Year's activities, national experts could be invited to analyse the review and appraisal process and determine whether its findings are useful and its current methodology effective.

88. The fourth review and appraisal is based closely on the International Plan of Action on Ageing, but interpretations of the survey questions vary greatly among States. That difference of interpretation, however, is not apparent in questionnaire responses, and consequently is not discussed in the review document. Also, since the sample of countries responding is not identical, overall progress is difficult to assess. Finally, it should be noted that the review is a self-reporting exercise; it is not an independent evaluation of the impact of policy interventions.

89. In the future, other approaches to the review exercise could be explored, including household surveys and the elaboration of socio-economic indicators. The advantage of household surveys is that they can directly reflect the situation of a targeted population group, such as older persons; the main disadvantage is the high cost of such surveys.

90. There are already several well established indicators of demographic ageing with socio-economic implications, such as indicators in the speed of ageing and old-age dependency ratios. One of the ageing-specific indicators - life expectancy - has been an important component of the human development index (HDI). New indicators are now needed that capture the impact of national efforts to respond to population ageing. Such indicators could provide the

basis of an ageing index, similar to HDI, the gender-related development index (GDI) and the gender empowerment measure (GEM).

91. In view of the similar findings of each of the first four reviews and the inherent weakness of a review that is self-reporting and voluntary, it might be advisable to consider complementing the review in the future by conducting sample household surveys in each region, and/or by elaborating a global ageing index based on already available information. The cost-effectiveness of such an approach could be assessed by a consultant in time for the Commission for Social Development to decide at its thirty-sixth session, in 1999, on how to conduct the fifth survey that is due in 2001.

92. Meanwhile, Governments have welcomed the guide to setting national targets on ageing contained in the report of the Secretary-General entitled "Global targets on ageing for the year 2001: a practical strategy" (A/47/339). The suggested national targets have proved useful as a basis for national programmes in countries as diverse as Jamaica and Finland. National targets are derived from the recommendations of the Plan of Action, and are harmonized with the review questionnaire. Any revision of the review process should take national targets into account.

93. The eight global targets on ageing, designed to support national target-setting, could be integrated into an operational framework for the International Year of Older Persons, 1999, and the review of the Year in 2001. The constituent elements of each global target could serve both the activities of the Year and the achieving of those targets, and could include enabling steps, participating entities, suggestions for resource mobilization and evaluation.

94. While the review and appraisal process continues to move in four-year increments, two demographic trends suggest that a longer-range vision is imperative. First, the speed of ageing in developing countries: some developing countries are projected to increase the number of their older persons almost 10 times faster than developed countries. Second, the old-age dependency ratio in developed economies: by 2050, that ratio is estimated to reach 56 in Japan and 69 in Italy. Thus, measures to promote implementation of the Plan of Action would best be conceived within a long-term perspective to the year 2020 - a 2020 strategy - that elaborates concepts, outlines principles and suggests policy options based on the International Plan of Action on Ageing and the United Nations Principles for Older Persons. Such a strategy should be guided by the vision of a society for all ages, a society that promotes individual lifelong development and multigenerational cohesion, even as it promotes foresight and self-reliance among individuals and a cohort perspective among policy makers.

Notes

[1] See Report of the World Assembly on Ageing, Vienna, 26 July to 6 August 1982 (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.82.I.16), chap. VI.

[2] Of which 53 were received in time to be considered in the fourth review and appraisal.

[3] The World Ageing Situation 1991 (ST/CSDHA/14), part one, chap. II.

[4] See United States of America, Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, "An Aging World II", International Population Reports, pp. 25, 92-93 (Washington, D.C., US Government Printing Office, 1992).

Annex I

GOVERNMENT PARTICIPATION IN THE REVIEW AND APPRAISAL OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE INTERNATIONAL PLAN OF ACTION ON AGEING, 1984, 1988, 1992 AND 1996

Countries and areas	1984	1988	1992	1996
Albania	-	-	+	+
Argentina	+	-	+	-
Australia	+	-	+	+
Austria	-	-	-	+
Bahamas	-	+	-	+[a]
Bahrain	+	+	+	+
Bangladesh	-	+	-	+
Barbados	+	-	-	-
Belarus	-	-	+	-
Belgium	+	+	+	-
Belize	+	-	-	-
Benin	+	-	+	-
Bermuda	+	-	-	-
Bolivia	-	-	+	-
Botswana	+	-	-	-
Brazil	-	-	-	+
Brunei Darussalam	-	+	-	-
Bulgaria	+	-	-	-
Burkina Faso	+	+	+	+
Burundi	-	-	+	-
Cambodia	-	-	-	+
Canada	+	+	+	-
Cape Verde	-	-	+	-
Cayman Islands	+	-	-	-
Central African Republic	-	-	+	-
Chile	-	+	+	-

Countries and areas	1984	1988	1992	1996
China	-	+	+	+
Colombia	+	+	+	-
Congo	+	-	+	-
Costa Rica	+	+	+	-
Côte d'Ivoire	+	-	+	-
Cuba	+	+	+	-
Curacao	-	-	+	-
Cyprus	+	+	+	+
Czech Republic	+	+	+	+
Denmark	+	+	+	+
Djibouti	+	-	-	-
Dominican Republic	+	+	-	+
Ecuador	+	-	+	+
Egypt	+	+	+	-
El Salvador	+	-	+	+
Equatorial Guinea	-	-	+	-
Estonia	-	-	-	+
Ethiopia	+	+	-	+
Finland	+	+	+	+
Germany	+	-	+	+
Ghana	-	+	-	+
Greece	+	-	+	+
Guatemala	+	+	+	-
Guinea	-	-	+	+
Guyana	-	-	+	-
Haiti	+	-	-	-
Hong Kong	-	-	+	-
Honduras	-	-	-	+
Hungary	-	+	+	-
Iceland	-	-	+	-
India	-	+	-	-

Countries and areas	1984	1988	1992	1996
Iran (Islamic Republic of)	-	+	-	+
Iraq	+	+	-	+
Ireland	+	-	+	-
Israel	-	+	+	+
Italy	+	+	+	-
Jamaica	+	+	+	+
Japan	+	+	+	+
Jordan	+	-	+	+
Kenya	+	+	-	+
Kuwait	+	-	-	-
Lao People's Democratic Republic	-	-	+	-
Latvia	-	-	-	+
Lebanon	-	-	+	-
Lesotho	-	-	+	-
Liechtenstein	-	-	+	+
Luxembourg	+	-	-	-
Madagascar	-	+	-	-
Malawi	-	-	-	+
Malaysia	-	-	+	+
Mali	-	-	+	+
Malta	-	-	+	-
Marshall Islands	-	-	-	+
Mauritania	-	+	+	-
Mauritius	+	-	+	-
Mexico	-	+	+	+
Monaco	-	-	-	+
Morocco	+	+	+	-
Mozambique	-	-	+	-
Myanmar	+	-	+	-
Netherlands	-	+	-	+

Countries and areas	1984	1988	1992	1996
New Zealand	+	+	-	+
Nicaragua	-	+	+	-
Niger	-	-	+	-
Nigeria	+	-	+	-
Norway	+	+	-	-
Oman	+	+	+	+
Pakistan	+	-	+	-
Panama	-	+	+	-
Paraguay	-	-	+	-
Peru	+	-	+	+
Philippines	+	+	+	-
Portugal	+	-	+	+[a]
Qatar	-	+	+	-
Republic of Korea	-	+	-	-
Romania	+	+	-	-
Russia	+	+	-	-
Rwanda	-	+	-	-
Saint Lucia	-	-	+	-
Samoa	+	-	-	-
San Marino	-	-	-	+
Sao Tome and Principe	+	-	-	-
Saudi Arabia	+	-	-	-
Senegal	+	+	-	-
Singapore	+	+	-	-
Slovakia	+	+	+	+
South Africa	-	-	+	+
Spain	+	+	+	+
Sri Lanka	+	-	+	+
Swaziland	+	-	-	-
Sweden	+	-	+	+
Switzerland	-	+	+	-

Countries and areas	1984	1988	1992	1996
Syrian Arab Republic	-	+	-	+
Thailand	+	-	+	+
Togo	+	-	-	-
Trinidad and Tobago	+	-	+	+
Tunisia	-	-	+	-
Turkey	+	+	+	+
Uganda	+	-	-	-
Ukraine	+	-	-	+
United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	+	-	-	-
United Republic of Tanzania	+	+	+	-
United States of America	-	-	-	+
Uruguay	+	+	+	-
Vanuatu	+	-	-	-
Venezuela	+	-	-	-
Viet Nam	-	-	+	-
Yemen	-	+	-	-
Yugoslavia	+	+	-	-
Zambia	+	+	+	-
Zimbabwe	-	-	-	+

Note. A plus sign (+) indicates participation, a minus sign (-) non-participation.

[a] Reply received too late to be analysed in the present report.

Annex II

UNITED NATIONS AND AFFILIATED ENTITIES THAT SUBMITTED REPLIES TO THE 1996 QUESTIONNAIRE ON THE FOURTH REVIEW AND APPRAISAL OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE INTERNATIONAL PLAN OF ACTION ON AGEING

Division for the Advancement of Women of the United Nations Secretariat

United Nations Centre for Human Rights

United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat)

United Nations Development Programme

Economic Commission for Africa

Economic Commission for Europe

Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia

United Nations International Drug Control Programme

International Labour Organization

International Monetary Fund

International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women

World Health Organization

Annex III

NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS THAT SUBMITTED REPLIES TO THE 1996 QUESTIONNAIRE ON THE FOURTH REVIEW AND APPRAISAL OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE INTERNATIONAL PLAN OF ACTION ON AGEING

The list set out below includes both national and international non-governmental organizations that replied to the questionnaire. Country of location is shown for national organizations only.

The Abbeyfield Society (United Kingdom)

Age Action (Ireland)

Alicia Moreau de Justo Foundation (Argentina)

Alzheimer National Association (Romania)

American Association of Retired Persons (United States)

AMAM (Asociacion Mexicana De Adulto Mayores) (Mexico)

Asociacion Gerontologica Costrarriceuse (Coalition '99 Network) (Costa Rica)

Bangladesh Association for the Aged, Institute of Geriatric Medicine (Bangladesh)

Beneficium (Slovakia)

Care and Nursing Home Advice Service-Florida (United States)

Centre for Gerontological Studies (India)

Centro De Estudios Para El Climaterio (Argentina)

CLEIRPPA (Centre de liaison d'études, d'informations et de recherches sur les problémes des personnes agées) (France)

Commission femmes et monde vieillissant (CFFB) (Belgium)

Confederation des pensioners socialistes-Belgique (Belgium)

Consultora Y Centro De Capacitcion (Chile)

Council on the Ageing (Australia)

Croatian Pensioners Party (Croatia)

Elderhostel (Canada)

Elderly Women's Activities Center (Lithuania)

Eurolink Age

FETAG (Panafrican Foundation for Childhood and Old Age Protection)

FIAPA (Federation Internationale des Associations de Personnes Agees)

Foundation for Social Development for Senior Citizens (Japan)

Gray Panthers (United States)

Geriatric Medicine Department, Madras College (India)

Helpage International: Cambodia Programme

Helpage Sri Lanka

Helpage Zimbabwe

International Association of Gerontology

International Council of Nurses

International Institute for Applied Systems Analysis

International Institute on Ageing

Institute of Gerontology, University of Malta (Malta)

International Institute for Human Resources Development (United States)

International Senior Citizens Association

InterRAI Inc., Hackensack University Medical Center (United States)

International Social Security Association

Japan Aging Research Center (Japan)

Les Panthères grises (France)

National Council for the Elderly (Hungary)

National Council of Social Service (Singapore)

Nomme Liberty Baptist Church (Estonia)

Parliamento de la Tercers (Argentina)

Samathuva Samudhayam (India)

Second Half of Life Foundation (Argentina)

Soroptimist International

Society of St. Vincent de Paul (Trinidad and Tobago)[a]

Sri Lanka Government Pensioners' Welfare Organization (Sri Lanka)

Third Age Challenge Trust (United Kingdom)

Vienna NGO Committee on Ageing (Austria)

World Federation of Methodist Women

Wonderful Aging Club Tokyo (Japan)

World Veterans Federation

Zivot 90 Prague (Czech Republic)

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[a] Reply received too late to be included in the present report.